

Nandakovada Sutta (MN#146) - Advice From Nandaka

by Bhikkhu Bodhi

Description notes:

This sutta is a demonstration of the kind of teaching the Buddha and his monks gave to those who wanted to achieve enlightenment. A group of nuns are being taught by the Venerable Nandaka a lesson about impermanence and the impersonal nature of the Process of Dependent Origination which one can observe during the meditation session. It becomes clear that there is no controller or self (Atta) making any arising phenomena occur. So the lesson clarifies an understanding of Anicca (impermanence) and Anatta (impersonal nature of existence).

The circumstances in the opening of the sutta are interesting because the Venerable Nandaka is asked take his turn teaching a group of nuns who, it is very clear to him, through his ability to see past lives, that these women were his wives in other lifetimes before this one! He, at first, does not want to go up to where the nuns are, due to the danger of desire arising, and needs to be asked to go by the Buddha's personal request.

In this exercise we are using the translation by Bhikkhu Bodhi from the Majjhima Nikaya, the Middle Length Sayings in order to write this out fully beyond any ditto marks.

November 2005

MN 146 NANDAKOVADA SUTTA

ADVICE FROM NANDAKA

Key	Meaning
N:	Nandaka speaking
S:	Sisters (or students) speaking

1. THUS HAVE I HEARD, on one occasion the Blessed One was living at Savatthi in Jeta's grove, Anathapindika's Park.

2. Then Mahapajapati Gotami together with five hundred bhikkhunis went to the Blessed One. After paying homage to the Blessed One, she stood at one side and said to him: "Venerable sir, let the Blessed One advise the Bhikkhunis, let the Blessed One instruct the bhikkhunis, let the Blessed One give the bhikkhunis a talk on the Dhamma.

3. Now on that occasion the elder bhikkhus were taking turns in advising the bhikkhunis, but the venerable Nandaka did not want to advise them when his turn came. Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ananda: "Ananda, whose turn is it today to advise the bhikkhunis?"

"Venerable sir, it is the venerable Nandaka's turn to advise the bhikkhunis, but he does not want to advise them even though it is his turn.

4. Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Nandaka: "Advise the bhikkhunis, Nandaka, Instruct the bhikkhunis, Nandaka. Give the bhikkhunis a talk on the Dhamma, brahmin."

"Yes venerable sir," the venerable Nandaka replied. Then in the morning, the venerable Nandaka dressed, and taking his bowl and outer robe, went into Savatthi for alms. When he had wandered for alms in Savatthi and had returned from his almsround, after his meal he went with a companion to the Rajaka Park . The bhikkhunis saw the venerable Nandaka coming in the distance and prepared a seat and set out water for the feet. The venerable Nandaka sat down on the seat made ready and washed his feet. The bhikkhunis paid homage to him and sat down to one side. When they were seated, the venerable Nandaka told the bhikkhunis:

5.

N: "Sisters, this talk will be in the form of questions. When you understand, you should say: 'We understand'; when you do not understand you should say: 'We do not understand'; when you are doubtful or perplexed you should ask me: 'How is this, venerable sir? What is the meaning of this?'

S: "Venerable sir, we are satisfied and pleased with the master Nandaka for inviting us in this way.

6.

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is the EYE permanent or impermanent?

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir,"

N: "Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No venerable sir."

N: "Sisters, what do you think? Is the EAR permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Sisters, what do you think? Is the NOSE permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: "Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Sisters, what do you think? Is the TONGUE permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is the BODY permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Sisters, what do you think? Is the MIND permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Why is that?"

S: "Because, venerable sir, we have already seen this well as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'THESE SIX INTERNAL BASES ARE IMPERMANENT.'"

N: "Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with proper wisdom.

7. "Sisters, what do you think? Are FORMS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are SOUNDS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir.

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are ODOURS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are FLAVOURS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are TANGIBLES permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are MINDS-OBJECTS permanent or impermanent?" –

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Why is that?"

S: "Because, venerable sir, we have already seen this well as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'THESE SIX EXTERNAL BASES ARE IMPERMANENT'".

N: "Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with proper wisdom.

8. Sisters, what do you think? Is EYE-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

–

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is EAR-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

R: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is NOSE-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is TONGUE-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is BODY-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?" –

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is MIND-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Why is that?"

S: "Because, venerable sir, we have already seen this well as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'THESE SIX CLASSES OF CONSCIOUSNESS ARE IMPERMANENT'".

N: "Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with proper wisdom.

9. Sisters, suppose an oil lamp is burning: its oil is impermanent and subject to change, its wick is impermanent and subject to change, its flame is impermanent and subject to change, and its radiance is impermanent and subject to change. Now would anyone be speaking rightly who spoke thus: 'While this oil-lamp is burning, its oil, wick, and flame are impermanent and subject to change, but its radiance is permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Why is that?"

S: "Because, venerable sir, while that oil lamp is burning, its oil wick, and flame are impermanent and subject to change, so its radiance must be impermanent and subject to change."

N: "So too, sisters, would anyone be speaking rightly who spoke thus: 'These six internal bases are impermanent and subject to change, but the pleasant, painful, or neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling that one experiences in dependence upon the six internal bases is permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Why is that?"

S: "Because, venerable sir, each feeling arises in dependence upon its corresponding condition, and with the cessation of its corresponding condition, the feeling ceases.

N: "Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with proper wisdom.

10. Sisters, suppose a great tree is standing possessed of heartwood: its root is impermanent and subject to change, its trunk is impermanent and subject to change, its branches and foliage are impermanent and subject to change, and its shadow is impermanent and subject to change. Now would anyone be speaking rightly who spoke thus: 'The root, trunk, branches, and foliage of this great tree standing possessed of heartwood are impermanent and subject to change, but its shadow is permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change'?"

S: “No, venerable sir.

N: “Why is that?”

S : “Because, venerable sir, the root, trunk, branches, and foliage of this great tree standing possessed of heartwood are impermanent and subject to change, so its shadow must be impermanent and subject to change.”

N: “So too, sisters, would anyone be speaking rightly who spoke thus: ‘These six external bases are impermanent and subject to change, but the pleasant, painful, or neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling that one experiences in dependence upon the six external bases is permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change’?”

S: “No, venerable sir.”

N: “Why is that?”

S: “Because, venerable sir, each feeling arises in dependence upon its corresponding condition, and with the cessation of its corresponding condition, the feeling ceases.

N: “Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with proper wisdom.

11. Sisters, suppose a skilled butcher or his apprentice were to kill a cow and carve it up with a sharp butcher’s knife. Without damaging the inner mass of flesh and without damaging the outer hide, he would cut, sever, and carve away the inner tendons, sinews, and ligaments with the sharp butcher’s knife. Then having cut, severed, and carved all this away, he would remove the outer hide and cover the cow again with that same hide. Would he be speaking rightly if he were to say: ‘This cow is joined to this hide just as it was before’?”

S: “No, venerable sir.”

N: “Why is that?”

S: “Because, venerable sir, if that skilled butcher or his apprentice were to kill a cow . . . and cut, sever, and carve all that away, even though he covers the cow again with that same hide and says: ‘This cow is joined to this hide just as it was before’ that cow would still be disjoined from that hide.”

12.

N: Sisters, I have given this simile in order to convey a meaning. This is the meaning: ‘The inner mass of flesh’ is a term for the six internal bases. ‘The outer hide’ is a term for the six external bases. ‘The inner tendons, sinews, and ligaments’ is a term for delight and lust. ‘The sharp butcher’s knife’ is a term for noble wisdom – the noble wisdom that cuts, severs, and carves away the inner defilements, fetters, and bonds.

13. “Sisters there are these SEVEN ENLIGHTENMENT FACTORS through the development and cultivation of which a monk, by realising for himself with direct knowledge, here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints. What are the seven?

Here sisters, a monk develops the MINDFULNESS enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the INVESTIGATION-OF-EXPERIENCE enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the ENERGY enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the JOY enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the TRANQUILITY enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the COLLECTEDNESS enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the EQUANIMITY enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

These are the seven enlightenment factors through the development and cultivation of which a meditator, by realising for himself with direct knowledge, here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.”

14. When the venerable Nandaka had advised the bhikkhunis thus, he dismissed them saying: “Go sisters, it is time.” Then the bhikkhunis, having delighted and rejoiced in the venerable Nandaka’s words, rose from their seats, and after paying homage to the venerable Nandaka, departed keeping him on their right. They went to the blessed One, and after paying homage to him, stood at one side. The Blessed One told them “Go, sisters, it is time.” Then the bhikkhunis paid homage to the Blessed One and departed keeping him on their right.

15. Soon after they had left, the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus: “Monks, just as on the Uposatha day of the fourteenth people are not doubtful or perplexed as to whether the moon is incomplete or full, since then the moon is clearly incomplete, so too, those bhikkhunis are satisfied with Nandaka’s teaching of the Dhamma, but their intention has not yet been fulfilled.”

16. Then Blessed One addressed the venerable Nandaka: “Well then, Nandaka, tomorrow too you should advise those bhikkhunis in exactly the same way.”

“Yes, venerable sir” the venerable Nandaka replied. Then, the next morning the venerable Nandaka dressed, and taking his bowl and outer robe, went into Savatthi for alms. When he had wandered for alms in Savatthi and had returned from his almsround, after his meal he went with a companion to the Rajaka Park . The bhikkhunis saw the venerable Nandaka coming in the distance and prepared a seat and set out water for the feet. The venerable Nandaka sat down on the seat made ready and washed his feet. The bhikkhunis paid homage to him and sat down to one side. When they were seated, the venerable Nandaka told the bhikkhunis:

17.

N: “Sisters, this talk will be in the form of questions. When you understand, you should say: ‘We understand’; when you do not understand you should say: ‘We do not understand’; when you are doubtful or perplexed you should ask me: ‘How is this, venerable sir? What is the meaning of this?’”

S: "Venerable sir, we are satisfied and pleased with the master Nandaka for inviting us in this way."

18.

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is the EYE permanent or impermanent?

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir,"

N: "Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No venerable sir."

N: "Sisters, what do you think? Is the EAR permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Sisters, what do you think? Is the NOSE permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: "Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Sisters, what do you think? Is the TONGUE permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is the BODY permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Sisters, what do you think? Is the MIND permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Why is that?"

S: "Because, venerable sir, we have already seen this well as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'THE SIX INTERNAL BASES ARE IMPERMANENT.'"

N: "Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with proper wisdom.

19. "Sisters, what do you think? Are FORMS permanent or impermanent?" –

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are SOUNDS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir.

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are ODOURS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are FLAVOURS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are TANGIBLES permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

R: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Are MIND-OBJECTS permanent or impermanent?" –

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Why is that?"

S: "Because, venerable sir, we have already seen this well as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'THESE SIX EXTERNAL BASES ARE IMPERMANENT.'"

N: "Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with

proper wisdom.

20 . Sisters, what do you think? Is EYE-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?" –

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is EAR-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

R: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is NOSE-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is TONGUE-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is BODY-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: Sisters, what do you think? Is MIND-CONSCIOUSNESS permanent or impermanent?"

S: "Impermanent, venerable sir"

N: Is what is impermanent suffering or happiness?"

S: "Suffering, venerable sir."

N: "Is what is impermanent, suffering and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, this I am, this is my self'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Why is that?"

S: "Because, venerable sir, we have already seen this well as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'THESE SIX CLASSES OF CONSCIOUSNESS ARE IMPERMANENT.'"

N: "Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with proper wisdom.

21. Sisters, suppose an oil lamp is burning: its oil is impermanent and subject to change, its wick is impermanent and subject to change, its flame is impermanent and subject to change, and its radiance is impermanent and subject to change. Now would anyone be speaking rightly who spoke thus: 'While this oil-lamp is burning, its oil, wick, and flame are impermanent and subject to change, but its radiance is permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change'?"

S: "No, venerable sir."

N: "Why is that?"

S: "Because, venerable sir, while that oil lamp is burning, its oil wick, and flame are impermanent and subject to change, so its radiance must be impermanent and subject to change."

N: "So too, sisters, would anyone be speaking rightly who spoke thus: 'These six internal bases are impermanent and subject to change, but the pleasant, painful, or neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling that one experiences in dependence upon the six internal bases is permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change'?"

S: “No, venerable sir.”

N: “Why is that?”

S: “Because, venerable sir, each feeling arises in dependence upon its corresponding condition, and with the cessation of its corresponding condition, the feeling ceases.

N: “Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with proper wisdom.

22. Sisters, suppose a great tree is standing possessed of heartwood: its root is impermanent and subject to change, its trunk is impermanent and subject to change, its branches and foliage are impermanent and subject to change, and its shadow is impermanent and subject to change. Now would anyone be speaking rightly who spoke thus: ‘The root, trunk, branches, and foliage of this great tree standing possessed of heartwood are impermanent and subject to change, but its shadow is permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change’?”

S: “No, venerable sir.”

N: “Why is that?”

S: “Because, venerable sir, the root, trunk, branches, and foliage of this great tree standing possessed of heartwood are impermanent and subject to change, so its shadow must be impermanent and subject to change.”

N: “So too, sisters, would anyone be speaking rightly who spoke thus: ‘These six external bases are impermanent and subject to change, but the pleasant, painful, or neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling that one experiences in dependence upon the six external bases is permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change’?”

S: “No, venerable sir.”

N: “Why is that?”

S: “Because, venerable sir, each feeling arises in dependence upon its corresponding condition, and with the cessation of its corresponding condition, the feeling ceases.

N: “Good, good, sisters! So it is with a noble disciple who sees this as it actually is with proper wisdom.

23. Sisters, suppose a skilled butcher or his apprentice were to kill a cow and carve it up with a sharp butcher’s knife. Without damaging the inner mass of flesh and without damaging the outer hide, he would cut, sever, and carve away the inner tendons, sinews, and ligaments with the sharp butcher’s knife. Then having cut, severed, and carved all this away, he would remove the outer hide and cover the cow again with that same hide. Would he be speaking rightly if he were to say: ‘This cow is joined to this hide just as it was before’?”

S: “No, venerable sir.”

N: “Why is that?”

S: “Because, venerable sir, if that skilled butcher or his apprentice were to kill a cow . . . and cut, sever, and carve all that away, even though he covers the cow again with that same hide and says: ‘This cow is joined to this hide just as it was before’ that cow would still be disjoined from that hide.”

24.

N: Sisters, I have given this simile in order to convey a meaning. This is the meaning: ‘The inner mass of flesh’ is a term for the six internal bases. ‘The outer hide’ is a term for the six external bases. ‘The inner tendons, sinews, and ligaments’ is a term for delight and lust. ‘The sharp butcher’s knife’ is a term for noble wisdom – the noble wisdom that cuts, severs, and carves away the inner defilements, fetters, and bonds.

25. “Sisters THERE ARE THESE SEVEN ENLIGHTENMENT FACTORS through the development and cultivation of which a monk, by realising for himself with direct knowledge, here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints. What are the seven?

Here sisters, a monk develops the MINDFULNESS enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the INVESTIGATION-OF-EXPERIENCE enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the ENERGY enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the JOY enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the TRANQUILITY enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the COLLECTEDNESS enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

He develops the EQUANIMITY enlightenment factor, which is supported by seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, and ripens in relinquishment.

These are the seven enlightenment factors through the development and cultivation of which a meditator, by realising for himself with direct knowledge, here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.”

26. When the venerable Nandaka had advised the bhikkhunis thus, he dismissed them saying: “Go sisters, it is time.” Then the bhikkhunis, having delighted and rejoiced in the venerable Nandaka’s words, rose from their seats, and after paying homage to the venerable Nandaka, departed keeping him on their right. They went to the blessed One, and after paying homage to him, stood at one side. The Blessed One told them “Go, sisters, it is time.” Then the bhikkhunis paid homage to the Blessed One and departed keeping him on their right.

27. Soon after they had left, the Blessed One addressed the monks: “Monks just as on the Uposatha day of the fifteenth people are not doubtful or perplexed as to whether the moon is incomplete or full, since then the moon is clearly full, so too, those bhikkhunis are satisfied with Nandaka’s teaching of the Dhamma and their intention has been fulfilled. Monks, even the least advanced of those five hundred bhikkhunis is a stream-enterer, no longer subject to perdition, bound for deliverance, headed for enlightenment.

That is what the Blessed One said. The monks were satisfied and delighted in the

Blessed One's words.

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